

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT EG
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN MAIL EDITORIAL ON HARASSMENT OF
- EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS

1. EDITORIAL MAY 13 ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EGYPTIAN MAIL, WHICH " IS SATURDAY VERSION EGYPTIAN GAZETTE, ADDRESSED ITSELF TO HARASSMENT OF EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS IN US BY MILITANT JEWISH GROUPS. IT DENOUNCED SUCH ACTIONS OF HOOLIGANISM AND CONTENDED THAT IF WASHINGTON AND PARTICULARLY NEW YORK POLICE FAIL TO GIVE EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS NECESSARY PROTECTION AGAINST PERPETRATORS, THEY SHOULD NOT PROTEST IF DIPLOMATS TAKE NECESSARY MEASURES TO PROTECT THEMSELVES. EDITORIAL POINTEDLY ENDED WITH COMMENT "AND ONE SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT THERE ARE AMERICAN DIPLOMATS IN EGYPT TOO."

2. ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN PAST REFERENCES IN EGYPTIAN PRESS TO HARASSMENT OF EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS, NO PREVIOUS ARTICLE HAS INCLUDED VEILED THREAT THAT THERE ARE ALSO AMERICAN DIPLOMATS HERE. WHILE EGYPTIAN MAIL, AND ITS SISTER ORGANIZATION EGYPTIAN GAZETTE, ARE PROBABLY THE
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POOREST NEWSPAPERS IN EGYPT AND ARE NOT WIDELY READ BY EGYPTIANS, THEY ARE IMPORTANT SOURCE OF NEWS TO AMERICANS AND SOME OTHER FOREIGNERS LIVING IN EGYPT. THUS, VEILED THREAT WILL NOT BE LOST ON AMERICAN AND FOREIGN COMMUNITY. IT COULD CAUSE SOME UNEASINESS AMONG EMBASSY STAFF MEMBERS.

3. IN VIEW THIS SITUATION, AMBASSADOR CALLED FONMIN CHEF DU CABINET AHMED MAHER THIS MORNING TO DRAW HIS ATTENTION TO EGYPTIAN MAIL EDITORIAL AND ESPECIALLY TO LAST SENTENCE. AMBASSADOR NOTED USG HAS CONDEMNED HARASSMENT AGAINST EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS AND UN EMPLOYEES IN US AND SAID HE WAS UNDER IMPRESSION THAT EFFECTIVE POLICE MEASURES ALONG WITH CONDEMNATION BY RESPONSIBLE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAD BROUGHT SUCH HARASSMENT TO AN END. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, EGYPTIAN MAIL'S CURIOUSLY BELATED EDITORIAL, COUPLED WITH WHAT COULD BE THE THREAT, SEEMED OUT OF PLACE.

4. MAHER SAID HE HAD NOT SEEN EDITORIAL AND EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT ANYONE WOULD TAKE EGYPTIAN MAIL SERIOUSLY. AMBASSADOR AGREED BUT NOTED THAT IT IS READ BY ALL AMERICANS AND MANY OTHER FOREIGNERS. MAHER SAID MFA HAS HAD NO RECENT REPORT OF HARASSMENT OF EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS IN US AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR USG'S ACTIONS TO STOP SUCH HARASSMENT. WITHOUT READING EDITORIAL, HE AGREED THAT IT WAS OUT OF PLACE AND IRRESPONSIBLE FOR EGYPTIAN NEWSPAPER TO APPEAR TO BE MAKING THREAT AGAINST AMERICAN DIPLOMATS. HE UNDERTOOK LOOK INTO MATTER AND LET US KNOW.

5. COMMENT: WHY PAPER SHOULD HAVE CARRIED EDITORIAL NOW IS ANYONE'S GUESS. JUDGING FROM ITS PLACEMENT IT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WAS A SPACE FILLER AND MAY HAVE BEEN WRITTEN SOME TIME AGO. WE AGREE EGYPTIAN MAIL (AND GAZETTE) ARE UNIMPORTANT PAPERS BUT MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THAT THEIR LIMITED READERSHIP INCLUDES MISSION STAFF. IN ORDER ALLAY ANY UNEASINESS STAFF MAY HAVE AS RESULT OF EDITORIAL, AMBASSADOR INTENDS ALSO RAISE MATTER IN LOW KEY WITH MININFO WITH A VIEW TO HAVING LATTER DO SOME KNUCKLE-RAPPING. GOE ALMOST CERTAINLY DID NOT INSPIRE AND WOULD NOT COUNTENANCE ACTION TOWARD AMERICAN DIPLOMATS.

6. RSO HAS BEEN INFORMED AND APPROPRIATE PRECAUTIONS WILL BE TAKEN.

7. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF EDITORIAL: BEGIN TEXT:

"THERE IS A NASTY GROUP OF PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES WHO HAVE TAKEN IT UPON THEMSELVES TO TRY TO DISRUPT RELATIONS BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND CAIRO BY HARASSING EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE GROUP IS ONE OF DEDICATED 'JEWISH MILITANTS', A EUPHEMISM FOR THE OUT-OF-WORK DREGS AND OTHER RIFF-RAFF OF AMERICAN SOCIETY.

"THEIR CHERISHED GOAL IS TO 'DISRUPT EGYPTIAN-AMERICAN

CO-ORDINATION', AND 'HAMPER PRESIDENT CARTER'S EFFORTS
TO IMPOSE A SOLUTION ON ISRAEL'. AND THE WAY THEY
INTEND TO ACCOMPLISH THIS IS BY HARASSING EGYPTIAN
DIPLOMATS 'NON-VIOLENTLY AND LEGALLY,' IN ORDER TO
CREATE TENTION'. TO HELP THEIR EFFORT ALONG THE SCUM
OF NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON BRANDISHED SIGNS SAYING
'SADAT IS A LIAR', AND 'SADAT CAN'T FOOL US'.

"NEEDLESS TO SAY, WHAT THESE UNDISTINGUISHED JEWISH
HOOLIGANS NEED IS A LONG SPELL IN THE COOLER. HARASSMENT
IS NOT LEGAL AND CAN ONLY LEAD TO VIOLENCE. IF
WASHINGTON AND, IN PARTICULAR, NEW YORK POLICE FAIL
TO GIVE EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS THE NECESSARY PROTECTION
AGAINST THESE HOOLIGANS THEN THEY SHOULD NOT PROTEST
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IF THE DIPLOMATS TAKE THE NECESSARY MEASURES TO PROTECT
THEMSELVES. AND ONE SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT THERE ARE
AMERICAN DIPLOMATS IN EGYPT TOO." EILTS

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